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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, October 14, 2003

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## **Birkholz, Jones Testify Against ‘Meth’ Labs**

*Senate committee votes to recommend legislation to tighten penalties*

LANSING—Methamphetamine is a highly toxic and addictive drug, state Sen. Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp) and Eaton County Sheriff Rick Jones said today while testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee on a package of bills that will increase fines and penalties for persons who operate a ‘meth’ lab or are found in possession of the illegal substance.

“There are long term problems associated with this illegal drug,” said Birkholz. “It causes birth defects, behavioral problems and disrupts families, leaving many victims in its wake. This legislation will help eradicate the problem and allow for increased law enforcement and penalties.”

“In my over 30 years of law enforcement experience, methamphetamine is the most addictive, nasty drug I’ve seen,” Jones said. “This package is a good start against drugs, and I commend this committee and encourage you to move forward.”

The Committee unanimously voted to recommend the package of bills that will include methamphetamine and ecstasy with heroine and cocaine delivery/ possession offenses so the punishment will increase with the amount of meth delivered or possessed. It will also make the possession or transport of anhydrous ammonia (an ingredient in meth) in a non-approved container a five-year felony and increase penalties for the theft of anhydrous ammonia.

Also testifying in support of the legislation was the Honorable Harvey Hoffman, 56<sup>th</sup> District Court and Eaton County Prosecutor Jeff Sauter.

-30-

**Comments from Sen. Birkholz on the Meth Lab Legislation are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop) or by calling the radio hotline at 517-373-4000. You can also download a photo from the Senate Majority Photowire at the same web address.**